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Marzenna Magda-Adamowicz,  
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Publication entitled: *Dziecko i dzieciństwo w badaniach pedagogicznych* (*Child and Childhood in Pedagogical Research*), published in Toruń in 2020, edited by Marzenna Magda-Adamowicz and Ewa Kowalska, certainly meet the expectations of many readers undertaking studies on children and childhood. As we read in the introduction of the monograph, every reader – both a pedagogue, parent and teacher seeking methodological inspiration in the process of improving their own practice – will find valuable scientific analyzes of young researchers and pedagogical authorities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Editors, quoting priest Marian Nowak, remind the reader that “Pedagogy in its considerations goes to the future, aiming at the future good of man. It is a science of upbringing, which is why its subject of research rests in generally understood upbringing, i.e. upbringing activities aimed at equipping the entire society with knowledge, general skills, interests, system of values, attitudes and beliefs as well as adaptation to influence its own development” (p. 6). Magda-Adamowicz and Kowalska emphasize the importance of research on children and childhood referring to the achievements of outstanding educators, such as Agata Cudowska, Beata Dyrda, Anna Karpińska, Tadeusz Lewowicki, Mirosław Szymański and others. It can be seen that the volume includes not only proposals of methodological solutions in research on children and childhood, but also analyzes of methods helpful in the research process on the philosophy of education. The authors of the introduction seem to follow the reflection

of Franciszek Marian Nowak, who argues that “Specific, non-theoretical elements and aspects, although related to theoretical activities, form the basis of this diversity and pluralism that we encounter in specific theoretical formulations (both general and specific) in relation to education. The variety and diversity of approaches make it sometimes reasonable to talk about upbringing philosophies, not just one upbringing philosophy. For this reason, one must be more open and submissive today to accept the specific research methods that are usually used by particular forms of philosophical and pedagogical theorization” (Nowak 2016, p. 25).

The publication has been divided into four parts, in which individual chapters have been distinguished.

In the first part, Piotr Mikiewicz (the chapter *Znaczenie teorii w badaniach społecznych – konstruowanie rzeczywistości i jej interpretacji*) writes about the importance of theory in social research – constructing reality and its interpretation, arguing that “theory and empiricism are interdependent. Regardless of whether we use inductive or deductive reasoning, scientific cognition cannot be limited only to theory or only to data” (p. 19). According to the author, “practicing science is a specific form of telling about the world”, which involves the need for in-depth theoretical studies, because “Lack of rooting, in theory, will result in empirical work, from which there are no conclusions, not only for science in itself but for people’s lives” (p. 26).

The importance of the subjective perception of the surveyed people is particularly emphasized by Magdalena Cuprjak in the chapter *Miejsce podmiotu w przestrzeni paradygmatów nauk pedagogicznych*. The reflections made by the author are very important from the point of view of problems devoted to the ethics of scientific cognition, because “recognition of human subjectivity (...) is rather a potential that the researcher and the respondent can use. Whether or not they do so depends on their sensitivity and subjective preconceptualization” (p. 44).

In the next study – *Wiązanie podejścia ilościowego z podejściem jakościowym w badaniach empirycznych w pedagogice (zarys analizy)* – Stanisław Palka, as he modestly notes, makes an “outline of the analysis” regarding linking the quantitative approach with the qualitative approach in empirical research in pedagogy. The researcher emphasizes above all the “multidimensionality” of man by presenting the connection of this “multidimensionality” with the methodology of individual scientific disciplines (p. 49). The author’s considerations clearly prove that the adoption of the model “the multidimensionality of a person brought up, educated and self-shaped, the adopted system of problem types and research categories can be used and solved in empirical research carried out with a quantitative approach, typical of natural sciences and social sciences modeled on them and with the qualitative approach typical of the humanities” (p. 50).

The continuation of the search for linking quantitative and qualitative positions in pedagogical research are the considerations of Mirosława Nycz-Drąg and Klaudia Żernik based around the issue of designing quantitative and qualitative research in

child pedagogy (the chapter *Projektowanie badań ilościowych i jakościowych w pedagogice dziecięcej*). The authors familiarize the reader with the research procedures on childhood and child in the context of both quantitative and qualitative research. In conclusion, they compare the positions described: "(...) qualitative researcher in child pedagogy looks for sense and meaning in children's behavior, tries to understand, describe and interpret it without adopting any hypotheses before" (p. 77). The authors emphasize his "cognitively naive attitude, open, devoid of a specific action plan (which is a distinctive feature of quantitative research), preliminary assumptions and reliable knowledge about the studied reality" (p. 77). Furthermore, they claim that qualitative research does not abandon the "sensations, feelings and values experienced during the implementation of the research procedure, but, on the contrary, admits that the study is a process that is the result of his personal, independent decisions that can evolve" (p. 77). They then argue that the "quantitative researcher", even before the start of the study, adopts a specific theory and the resulting concepts, follows social facts, describes and explains observed phenomena using the adopted theory, uses a carefully developed procedure, plan; step by step implements the next stages of this procedure to develop the most general, objective, reliable and accurate conclusions.

Małgorzata Kowalik-Olubińska, in the chapter *Słuchanie dziecięcych głosów w procesie badawczym – perspektywa etyczna*, conducted an analysis from an ethical perspective. The author, in the introduction, mentions that "The term *listening to children's voices* used in the title (...) signals the changes that contemporary research on childhood issues undergo" (p. 79). The author adopts the paradigm of social studies on childhood (childhood studies). Therefore, Kowalik-Olubińska needs to grant "children the status of participants, not the subjects of research explorations undertaken by adults. It is assumed that they are the richest and most appropriate source of knowledge about children and their ways of experiencing everyday life" (p. 80). The author argues that "As a consequence, there is a clear departure from conducting research 'about' in favor of undertaking research 'with' children whose primary goal is to reach various childhood worlds and show the multitude of children's life paths and meanings that they give the world" (p. 80). In addition, she analyzes the particularly important need, and even the obligation, to take a deeper reflection on many ethical issues.

This obligation results from the need to respect in the research process those values and principles that are recognized in the academy as the basic premise and criterion for ethicality of scientific research involving people (p. 80). Kowalik-Olubińska emphasizes the issue of communication between the researcher and the child, which is so important, e.g. in the process of obtaining the child's consent to participate in the study, protection "against possible harm", "care for children's psychological well-being" or related confidentiality of information. Also addressing the problem of interpreting research, the author teaches that "In the light of the issues discussed, it is particularly important for the researcher to deepen his or her own beliefs about children and childhood. (...) In realizing personal views, the researcher can help answer questions

such as: Who is the child? What child discourse am I in favor of? Am I willing to recognize a child as an immature person, dependent on adults and requiring constant care on their part, or rather a competent, autonomous person with the ability to influence events? What is childhood to me / how do I understand it? What childhood discourse am I attached to? What position do I assign to children in the structure of society? What rights am I willing to grant them?" (pp. 80–81). Answering these questions becomes the starting point for the author of the chapter to research an honest relationship with children.

In turn, Wiga Bendarkowa in the chapter *Rola metodologii językoznawstwa kognitywnego w procesie identyfikacji potencjału dziecka* presents an analysis of aspects related to the role of the methodology of cognitive linguistics in the process of identifying a child's potential (p. 91). Cognitivism, in her opinion, characterizes interdisciplinarity, "therefore a cognitive study of the language that people use and which allows them to be placed at the top of the ladder of biological organisms, requires openness to other disciplines of science, so that you can learn from them to help describe the grammar of the language" (p. 92). The author argues, among others, that the use of the cognitive methodology in pedagogical research is a guarantee of the anthropocentric nature of these studies: "The approach to a human being as a research subject located at the center of research allows for profiling both the common, socio-cultural and individual, resulting from the uniqueness of the person" (p. 101).

The second part of the reviewed monograph focuses on conventional studies of the child's situation. In this part, there are analyzes of such authorities as Stanisław Palka, Marzenna Magda-Adamowicz, Urszula Szuścik and Krystyna Żuchelkowska. The main focus of the analysis is the collection of information about the child's situation and childhood through the method of diagnostic survey, research experiment and sociometric techniques.

In the first chapter (*Dziecko jako obiekt i jako partner w badaniach pedagogicznych*), Stanisław Palka introduces the reader "to the issue of pedagogy methodology and pedagogical research methodology related to the research of children in the pre-school and early school development phase" (p. 105). Reading this chapter leads to the conclusion that pedagogical research of the child as an object of knowledge and partner of the researcher "can give evidence of a wealth of paths and cognitive paths, so it cannot be considered that the current research closes the area of accumulated knowledge, but that it opens up possibilities for further searching in the changing will become the conditions for the functioning of the child if, of course, these studies go beyond pedagogy itself, and are embedded in the current of research (...) on the border between pedagogy and other sciences, in which pedagogy will be accompanied by, among others, psychology, sociology or philosophy, putting the effects into a complementary set of elements of the reality model" (pp. 108–109).

In the next chapter (*Rozpoznawanie sytuacji dziecka, czyli o sondażu diagnostycznym*), Marzenna Magda-Adamowicz analyzes the topic of recognizing the child's situ-

ation using a diagnostic survey (p. 111). The author refers to a number of researchers and methodologists, among others Ewa Jarosz, Tadeusz Pilch, Maria Ziemaska and Irena Lepalczyk. A thorough study made by the author of the chapter leads to the conclusion that “the survey cannot be the only method used by the researcher. You should always use several methods and techniques, because diagnostic tests give extensive, but not in-depth knowledge” (p. 125). However, this does not change the fact that the diagnostic survey – as the researcher points out – plays a key role in researching the relationships, views, motives, interests, attitudes and existing situations and living conditions of children. It is also an important method of recognizing interpersonal ties between children and those around them (p. 125).

Reflection of Urszula Szuścik (the chapter *Rysunek dziecka źródłem wiedzy o nim*) outlines the reader problems related to the child’s artistic creativity in the context of a “complex mental process” that “transforms” children’s “perception, language and thinking” (p. 129). The author emphatically emphasizes the relationship between the child’s artistic creativity and the development of his personality, saying that “In drawing development, the child exceeds its previous cognitive experience, which is reflected in the change in the children’s drawing form. Drawing creativity is the first and basic form of artistic activity in which a child expresses his personality. As a result of drawing development, the child develops a system of signs that differentiate stylistically depending on the level of development of their general skills, abilities, including artistic abilities and general knowledge about the world and objects” (p. 134). Szuścik in a synthetic way analyzes the conditions of child development, the importance of social environments in the process of his development, and discusses the development of artistic creativity by making a successful attempt to determine the direction of getting to know the child, supporting his development and building relationships with him through “his creativity”, through his “drawings” (p. 139).

The next chapter (*Gromadzenie informacji o sytuacji dziecka i jego dzieciństwie, czyli o ankiecie, obserwacji i wywiadzie*) is a kind of development of reflection on the method of diagnostic survey. This time Marzenna Magda-Adamowicz discusses ways of collecting information about the child’s situation and childhood through a survey, observation and interview technique. The author, focusing on the aforementioned research techniques, indicates that by implementing them “we simultaneously integrate theoretical knowledge with practical experience” (p. 141).

In turn, Krystyna Żuchelkowska in the chapter *Eksperyment jako metoda badawcza w pedagogice dziecka* describes experiment as a research method in a child pedagogy (p. 159). The author argues that the use of a pedagogical experiment is a combination of a quantitative and qualitative approach and emphasizes that “that a pedagogical experiment can be successfully used in research on a child’s education, because it has high cognitive values, and also provides a wealth of inspiration for further research and allows activities that do not differ from the behavior of several-year-olds in everyday preschool life situations” (p. 160). The value of the research procedure described, ac-

cording to the author, is the fact that this procedure “takes place in normal conditions and thanks to this the surveyed children are not aware of the fact that they are the object of research” which allows them to feel safe and does not disturb their natural functioning (p. 160). The researcher discusses the theoretical and historical conditions of using a pedagogical experiment in a child’s pedagogy, discusses the research procedure characteristic for the experiment as well as the pros and cons of its application.

Next, Marzenna Magda-Adamowicz (the chapter *Relacje społeczne w grupie dzieci. Istota i proces badań socjometrycznych*) raises the problem of social relations in a group of children by making a detailed reflection on the essence and process of sociometric research (p. 171). The considerations are rooted in the issues of late childhood, primarily the participation of children in a peer group in a school class. The author discusses the etiology of sociometry, the importance of the sociometric method, the circumstances of its use as well as its characteristic techniques, stages of implementation of sociometric techniques, methods of analysis and interpretation of research results. Magda-Adamowicz argues that “Sociometric techniques provide invaluable information and instrumental knowledge necessary for research, but also pedagogical, emotional and social development of children and educational groups” (p. 186).

The third part of the monograph concerns selected areas of qualitative childhood research.

In the first chapter (*Fenomenografia jako strategia jakościowa w badaniach pedagogicznych nad edukacją dzieci*), Agnieszka Nowak-Łojewska reflects on phenomenography as a qualitative strategy in pedagogical research on children’s education. In the beginning, the author explains the essence of phenomenography, which “is inscribed in idealistic and subjectivist orientations with a humanistic tone directed at changing consciousness and striving for the balance of culture” (p. 190). Nowak-Łojewska (after Ferenc Marton) emphasizes that phenomenography, which is embedded in “an interpretative paradigm in which the individual is not perceived as a social actor, and his behavior is governed by previously established norms and recommendations without the possibility of creating himself, but as a participant in interactions, in the course of which he creates and gives meanings and interprets himself and the world around them”, he allows the use of a research procedure embedded in the humanistic trend, whose “the purpose is to describe, analyze and understand experience” (p. 191).

Staying in the phenomenographic perspective, we come to the chapter entitled *Pomaganie uczniom w dążeniu do rozumienia siebie. Badanie dokumentów w ujęciu jakościowym z wykorzystaniem perspektywy fenomenograficznej*. Iwona Kopaczyńska focused on helping students strive to understand themselves (p. 205). The chapter is devoted to the document examination procedure. The author notices the fact that “Qualitative research”, which – as she points out – “have their own tradition” are among those which in the field of pedagogy “still arouse various controversies, and applications – many difficulties, especially in the field of theoretical embedding and maintaining coherence as well as discussions on accuracy and reliability” (p. 206). Ac-



curate observations and reliable explanations made by the author of this chapter allow the reader to be convinced of the value of the document examination technique, as well as show ways of its proper application. The author, citing the example of research on “helping students understand each other”, also points out that the study of documents is also valuable because “it can reveal what cannot be seen at first glance” (p. 227).

In the next text (*Podejście biograficzne w badaniach z dziećmi*), Ewa Kowalska describes the biographical approach in research with children (p. 229). The author, referring to ethical dilemmas on researching children, focuses on the concept of childhood biography, which Martin Kohl introduced into the scientific debate. The value of childhood biography results, according to the author, among others from the fact that it is “a central element of the dispositional discourse of individualization, which requires the individual to constantly make his own life subject to in-depth reflection” (p. 233). Making an in-depth, reliable and very clear reflection on the biographical approach in the study of children, Kowalska (after Maria Szczepka-Pustowska) states: “The biographical approach appears in the area of research on child and childhood as particularly useful also because it is founded on the same paradigmatic change that underlies the perspective defining childhood as a category describing a life stage of intrinsic value, historically and culturally variable, socially constructed in the process of agreeing on meanings and affirming the child as an actor of social, reflective and active life” (p. 240).

Mirosława Nycz-Drąg (the chapter *Wywiad narracyjny w badaniach jakości wcześniejszej edukacji*) presents the reader with the perspective of using the narrative interview as a form of research on biography, which “consists in allowing people who agree to tell about their lives and treating the story as a kind of phenomenon, a manifestation of the individual experience of an individual” (p. 247). The author, describing the procedure of her own research on the quality of early childhood education confirms that “the narrative interview method is an open formula susceptible to creative modifications and additions. According to the assumptions of this method, social reality is treated as the result of interpretative processes, while the telling man as an expert in the matters he talks about” (p. 247).

In the next chapter (*Studium przypadku (case study) w badaniach z (nad) dziećmi*), Ewa Kowalska reflects on a case study in studies of (children), arguing that “case study, as a research strategy consisting in acquiring knowledge based on the analysis of so-called cases (from Latin *casus* – case; Pol. *kazus*)” (p. 253). The co-editor of the volume describes the sources of the title research strategy, shows the problem of various traditions of its application in the Polish methodology of pedagogical research, and also discusses “different ways of doing case study”. The case study, according to Kowalska, appears as a strategy during which you can apply both observations, interview and analysis of documents, as well as use “other methods of collecting and analyzing data, including quantitative data” depending on the researcher “a research question and the nature of the case (person? social group? institution? phenomenon?) that the researcher wants to analyze” (p. 265).

The last part of the monograph contains studies by Krystyna Chałas, Iwona Paszen-dy, Dorota Gołębniak and Beata Zamorska.

In the first chapter (*Integracyjne wymiary badań w działaniu. Szanse i bariery kreowania procesu badawczego*), Krystyna Chałas makes a very extensive and comprehensive problem signaled in the title of the analysis of “research in action that paying special attention to the problem of social integration and theory with practice” (p. 269). The author, sharing with the reader her own 15 years of experience “in conducting research in action (...) over-optimizing the conditions of integral development and education of a student”, shows a number of definitions of *research in action*, also emphasizing their “developmental nature in terms of competence of practitioner teachers; theorists’ competence; pedagogical reality in theoretical and practical aspect” (p. 271).

The researcher very precisely presents the specifics of methodological elements, discusses the integrative dimensions of research in action, shares the reflection based on her own experience of “research in action” focusing on organized educational practice to create educational opportunities for students. Chałas notes that the practice that became the subject of her research was “immersed” in “the world of values” and that “immersion (...) consisted in their realization, and thus in learning about them, accepting, evaluating, experiencing – introception expressed in the proceedings. It can therefore be said that the action understood in this way was ethically oriented, thanks to which new educational values were implemented” (p. 289). The author’s extraordinary knowledge, guiding her ideas, many years of efforts subjected to continuous evaluation and strong embedding of the research procedure in the contour theory of Stanisław Kunowski, Christian personalism, a didactic theory of multilateral personality training, as well as an objectivist-subjective theory of value convince the reader to make an effort for transforming the educational space and exchanging experience on the basis of educational practice.

In the next study (*Szkolna codzienność twórcza dziecka inspiracją badania w działaniu w edukacji studentów pedagogiki*), embedding the analysis made in the current research in the field of pedagogy students’ education, Iwona Paszen-da presents the child’s creative everyday life (p. 295). In the study, a detailed research procedure was used by the author, inspired by reflection on the category of “everyday life”. As she writes: “What is every day, seen through the eyes of a pedagogue, an approximate picture of contemporary education. The focus of educators on everyday possibilities of crossing borders, differentiating between disciplines or areas of research. It also creates openness, cooperation and rapprochement of pedagogy with other fields of science” (p. 296). The author who realizes “a critical analysis of the school everyday life of a younger school-age child and pedagogy students as candidates for their skills in the context of shaping their creative skills” is focused on “developing the ability to analyze pedagogy students through practical analysis of 30-hour classes with a creative group think and study the relationship between participation in activities related to creativity and the acquisition of professional skills” (p. 304). The author, after Dorota



Klus-Stańska and Marzenna Nowicka, was accepted in “limiting the reflection of the study and only to advanced training exercises for discouragement and treatment with artifacts, the exercise of classical classes is not a student ‘in general’, but such, personally shaped by processing school experiences”. In the researcher’s opinions, “the first years of school stay indisputably determine who the child is and strengthen his habits of thinking and understanding. Internships adapt later to changes in knowledge structures, intellectual strategies, cognitive motivation and reflection ability, (...) a significant role in this process of teacher evaluation” (p. 297). Hence, according to Paszenda, “it is so important to analyze and evaluate the development of available creative tools not only in therapeutic groups, but also in the field of pedagogical activities” (p. 297).

The last text contained in the discussed monograph is the chapter entitled *Wyjść poza opis. Badania interwencyjne w edukacji dziecka*, devoted to intervention research in child education constructed by Bogusława Dorota Gołębniak and Beata Zamorska (p. 315). The authors present in detail the history of teacher research in action, show modern variants of research in action – “basics, types, methodological traps”, also indicate the theoretical framework and methodological intervention studies in the approach of the cultural and historical theory of activity, they consider the social situation of development as the subject of research. The value of the text is not only a meticulous analysis of the theoretical assumptions of intervention research in child education, but also an analysis of an example of such research, which was undertaken by an education teacher kindergarten, for which “the inspiration to undertake research was observing (...) the behavior of one of the girls who differed from the skills of other children, especially during free play” (p. 330). Shown by Gołębniak and Zamorska analysis of the research procedure in “action”, thanks to being embedded in the teacher’s everyday life, definitely “goes beyond description” and inspires reflective reflection on practice.

In the conclusion of this review, it is worth noting that the main value of the reviewed monograph, which will certainly satisfy more than just a researcher, not only a child, childhood, upbringing, but also – simply – educational everyday life, is to draw attention to certain methodological controversies, as “convergent and divergent reflections of many authors of individual chapters (...) which arose from earlier empirical searches” (p. 9). Signed by Magda-Adamowicz and Kowalska in the introduction, the goal has certainly been achieved, because undoubtedly “The narrative presented in the monograph by numerous authors attempts to look at issues still bothering them about the child and his childhood” and this will undoubtedly result in “a new look on already existing and recognized phenomena, the discovery of new meanings, ‘will become’ (...) a source of inspiration for other researchers in child pedagogy” (p. 9). It can be unequivocally stated that every reader seeking both traditional and innovative concepts for research on children and childhood will find in this publication a number of valuable insights, experiences, personal analyzes and substantive tips.

## REFERENCES

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